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THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER

BOOKS V-VIII

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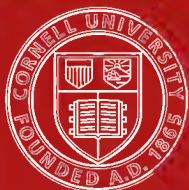
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The Odyssey of Homer,



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THE
ODYSSEY OF HOMER

BOOKS V—VIII.

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH BLANK VERSE

BY

W. CUDWORTH, M. INST. C.E.

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1893.

Not Published.

THE SONG OF DEMODOCUS IN THE EIGHTH BOOK
IS OMITTED.

BOOK V.

CALYPSO.

THE BARK BUILT BY ODYSSEUS WRECKED
THROUGH THE ANGER OF POSEIDON.

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

BOOK V.

Up from her couch by loved Tithonus' side
Rose Eos, to the immortals and to man
Dispensing light. And in a conclave sat
The gods, and in their midst high-thundering Zeus,
Mightiest of all: to whom Athene told
What trouble for Odysseus filled her breast.
For, lingering in the dwelling of the Nymph,
He was her care. "O father Zeus, and ye
Blessed immortal gods, in time to come
Let not a sceptred king be mild and kind,
And gracious, and a doer of the right ;
But let him ever be morose, and work
Unseemly things, since none of all the men
O'er whom he reigned, has cared to bear in mind
Godlike Odysseus, though he dealt with them

As would a father. But he in an isle
Abides, a prey to grief, within the hall
Of Nymph Calypso, who against his will
Detains him ; and he cannot reach again
His father-land. For not with him are ships
With oars, or comrades true, to carry him
Across the bosom of the vasty deep.
Now too his son beloved they seek to slay
Returning home, to sacred Pylos gone,
And heaven-blessed Lacedemon, if perchance
Some tidings of his father he might learn.”
And cloud-compelling Zeus thus answered her :
“ My daughter, what strange words have ventured
through
The ring-fence of thy teeth ! Was't not thyself
Who counselled this, that when Odysseus comes,
He may requite them ? But (thou hast the power),
Send thou Telemachus with guidance true ;
So may he scatheless gain his father-land,
And the foiled suitors go the way they came.”
He said : and turning to his son beloved,
Hermes, he gave command. “ Go, Hermes, tell
The fair-haired Nymph, (for errands oft are thine,)
How patient-souled Odysseus shall depart ;
And that not by the sending of the gods
Or mortal men ; but on a well-bound bark
Through many hardships, on the twentieth day
He shall land safe on fruitful Scheria's shore,

Domain of the Phæakians, godlike men,
Who like a god will truly reverence him,
And in a ship to his dear father-land
Conduct him, giving him of brass and gold
Abundance, raiment too in plenty, such
As ne'er Odysseus bore away from Troy ;
Although he came unscathed and not without
His meed of spoil. For he, by fate's decree,
Shall see his friends and enter yet again
His high-roofed hall and much-loved father-land."'
So said he, nor did Hermes disobey.
At once upon his feet his sandals fair
He bound, immortal, golden, bearing him
Fleet as the wind across the watery waste,
And boundless desert. And he took his wand
Wherewith he lulls the eyes of whom he will,
And rouses others from their heavy sleep.
This grasping in his hands, across the land
Pieria flew the Argus-slayer ; soon
Quitting the sky he plunged into the deep,
And like a sea-gull skimmed across the waves,
Who fishing on dread ocean's troubled breast,
Dips her dense plumage in the briny sea.
So sped on Hermes o'er the countless waves.
But when to the far-distant isle he came,
He left the purple sea, and took the land
And passed on till a lofty cave he reached
Where dwelt the fair-haired Nymph, whom there he
found.

A great fire blazed upon the hearth, and far
Around the island spread the odorous fume
Of burning cedar and of thuya logs.
With a clear voice she sang within the cave,
The while the loom she tended, and a web
Wove with a golden shuttle. All around
Her dwelling a luxuriant thicket grew,
Alder and poplar, and of fragrant scent
The cypress. Nestled there the long-winged birds,
Owls, hawks, and screeching sea-fowl, birds who
haunt
The mighty deep. And round the grotto's mouth
A fruitful vine was trained wherefrom there hung
Clusters of grapes. And sparkled there four springs
Of limpid water, separate but near
Each other, and diverging diverse ways.
And bordering them there smiled a pleasant mead
Of violets and parsley, where if one—
E'en of the immortals came, the sight of it
His heart would cheer. There standing, gazed around
The Argus-slayer ;—when at length his mind
Had realised the scene, the grotto wide
He forthwith entered, and the goddess fair
Failed not to recognize him when she looked.
For to each other the immortal gods
Are never strange, though dwelling far apart.
High-souled Odysseus found he not within,
For he was sitting weeping on the shore,

As was his wont, and troubled sore at heart,
Groaning gazed sadly on the barren sea.
Calypso questioned Hermes, seating him
Upon a sumptuous chair : " Why comest thou
Hermes with golden wand, my worshipful
And friendly guest ? Thou hast not hitherto
This isle frequented ! Say what fills thy mind !
Thy wishes I would gladly bring to pass.
But come and let me first before thee place
The stranger's due." So saying she set out
A table, and ambrosia laid thereon,
And mixed red nectar. And then ate and drank
The guide and Argus-slayer. And what time
His meal was ended and his heart made glad
With fair Calypso's cheer, her answering,
He said : " A goddess, thou hast questioned me,
A god, about my coming ; wherefore I
Will tell thee truly, since thou biddest me.
'Twas Zeus who ordered me to come to thee,
Though all reluctant, for who willingly
Would dare to cross so vast a watery waste.
No city have men there, nor render they
Choice hecatombs and offerings to the gods,
But 'tis not in the power of any god
To baffle or o'erreach the will of Zeus
The Ægis-bearer. Here with thee abides,
Saith he, the man most woe-begone of all
Who fought round Priam's walls nine years, and in

The tenth o'erthrew them, and set off for home.
But on their way they 'gainst Athene sinned,
Who baffled them with raging winds and waves.
Then perished in the deep his comrades good,
But him the gale cast on this island shore ;
And now he bids thee promptly let him go,
For fate decreeth not that, far from friends,
He here shall die ; his destiny is yet
To look upon his loved ones and regain
His lofty-roofed abode and father-land."'
So spake he, and Calypso, goddess fair,
Trembled, and answered him with wingèd words :
" Hard-hearted are ye, gods, and jealous more
Than all, who grudge that goddesses should couch
With men, though I would make one openly
My spouse beloved. So rosy-fingered Dawn
Choosing Orion, stirred the jealousy
Of the ease-loving gods, till Artemis
Chaste and gold-thronèd with her painless darts
Sought for him in Ortygia and slew.
And so again Demeter when she bent
Her will to Iasion, in a thrice-ploughed field
Mingling in love, was not long unobserved
By Zeus, who with his vivid lightning's flash
Smote him. And now, ye gods, ye suffer not
Me to be mated with a mortal man.
And yet I saved him, drifting all alone
Astride the keel when all his ship was rent

By Zeus's lightning in the wine-dark deep.
And therein perished all his comrades true,
But him the raging waves cast on my shore.
And much I loved and cherished him, and thought
To make him deathless, nor to know old age
In all his days. But now—since other gods
Are powerless to thwart the will of Zeus,
The Ægis-bearer—let him roam away
Across the barren sea, if Zeus incites
And bids him: but the means are not with me
To send him. Not with me are well-benched ships
Nor oarsmen who might carry him across
The ocean's vast expanse. But willingly
Will I suggest to him, concealing nought,
How he may scatheless reach his father-land.”
Then answered her the Argus-slayer: “Now,
Aid thou his going, and regard with awe
The wrath of Zeus, lest in the time to come
He bear a grudge against thee.” Saying this,
Vanished the mighty Argus-slayer. When
The queenly Nymph the message thought upon
Of Zeus, Odysseus lofty-souled she sought,
And found reclining on the shore, and ne'er
Were tears wiped from his eyes, but ebb'd away
His precious life with weeping for his home.
For no more took he pleasure in the Nymph,
Yet nightly slept, constrained, not willingly
With her who wished it in the polished cave.

And day through, sitting on the rocks and sands,
Heart-broken, full of tears and groans and grief,
He gazed upon the dreary ocean's face.

Then standing at his side the goddess said :

“ O fate-crushed man, no longer sit and weep,

Nor wear thy life away ; for now I'll work

For thy departure : so come, hew long beams

With fitting tools, and make a roomy craft,

And fix thereon a deck, that so thou mayst

Be safely borne across the murky deep.

And water will I stow in her and food,

And ruddy wine in plenty, so there'll be

No fear of famine. Raiment too I'll give,

And after thee a favouring breeze I'll send ;

So mayst thou scatheless win thy father-land.

May the gods grant it thee who boundless heaven

Possess, whose purposes and deeds are far

Beyond my own ! ” So said she, and divine

Odysseus, much enduring, shuddering gave

Answer in wingèd words : “ Some other thing

Surely, O goddess, fills thy mind, and not

My safe despatch, who bid'st me in a bark

Traverse the mighty deep so full of dread

And hazard, where no swift and gallant ships

Sail proudly, prospered by the winds of heaven.

I will not go to sea upon this craft

Without thy favour, nor unless thou swear

A mighty oath, O goddess, that no harm,

In any shape shall come to me from thee.”
So said he, and divine Calypso smiled,
And with her hand caressed him, and in tone
Familiar spoke: “In sooth thou art a rogue,
And in thy heart is no simplicity,
Who such an oath hast thought to ask from me!
Witness, O earth, and boundless heaven above,
And stream of Styx down-flowing, (highest oath
And awfulest among the blessed gods.)
No harm in any shape will I devise
Against thee, but what things my mind suggests,
Are such as I would for myself contrive
Did need arise. For well I know what’s just,
Nor is there in my breast an iron heart,
But merciful.” This said, the goddess fair
Led on with rapid step, and followed her
Odysseus, and the goddess and the man
Came to the polished cave, and there he sat
Upon the chair by Hermes lately left.
And food and drink she then before him set,
To cheer his heart, such food as mortals eat;
And fronting him she sat, and serving maids
For her ambrosia and nectar brought.
The feast made ready, on the well-spread board
They laid their hands. And when they’d pleased
themselves
With food and drink, Calypso, goddess fair,
Her words began: “Laertes’ Zeus-sprung son,

Crafty Odysseus, so thou now wouldst go
Back to thy home and much-loved father-land ?
Yet shall my blessing go with thee ! But if
Thou know's't the troubles fate designs for thee
Before thou comest to thy father-land,
Thou wouldst remain with me in this abode,
And mightst be free from death, though longing sore
To see thy wife, on whom from day to day
Thy thoughts are ever turning with desire.
She cannot surely rival me in form
Or stature, for no mortal dame may vie
With goddesses in figure and in look.”
Wary Odysseus answered her and said :
“ Dread goddess, be not grieved with me for this ;
Right well I know Penelope the wise
Cannot compare with thee in stateliness
And noble presence, for she mortal is,
And thou'rt immortal, and of endless youth.
But still day after day, I wish and hope
To gain my home, and see the joyful time
Of my return. But if perchance a god
Should wreck me in the deep, I will endure
And nurse within my breast a patient soul.
For many a time I've borne, and striven hard
With angry billows, and with foes in fight ;
'Twill only be once more.” He said, and sank
The sun, and darkness spread o'er land and sea.
Then to the smooth cave's inmost nook they two

Wended their way, and couching side by side,
Solaced themselves with love.—And when the Dawn,
Mist-born and rosy-fingered, brought her light,
Straightway Odysseus donned his vest and cloak,
And round her threw the nymph her mantle, wide
And silver grey, fine wove, a joy to see.
And round her waist a girdle fair she clasped,
With gold inwrought, and drew across her face
A veil; and then addressed herself to plan
High-souled Odysseus' voyage. First an axe
She gave him, weighty, suited to his arms,
Brazen and double-edged, with fair-carved helve
Of olive wood fast-wedged; and then she gave
A brightly-finished adze, and led the way
To her isle's verge, where flourished giant trees
Alder, and poplar, and heaven-stretching pine,
Sapless, well-seasoned, buoyant on the wave.
And having shown him where the tall trees grew,
The goddess, fair Calypso, to her home
Withdrew. But he began to hew the beams,
And soon the work was done. Twice ten in all
He felled, and squared and dressed right knowingly
With line and rule. Meanwhile Calypso brought
An auger, and he bored the treenail holes,
And fitted each to each, and firmly drove
The treenails home, and fastened well the clamps.
As a skilled craftsman rounds a vessel's hull,
Some roomy cargo-bearer, so upon

His broad-beamed barge Odysseus toiled and wrought.
The half-decks to the frequent ribs he fixed,
And finally the long side planks secured.
And then he made a mast, and matched it with
A yard to spread a sail, and added too
A rudder to direct her course aright.
And for a shelter from the waves he made
A bulwark all around of osier-work.
And took in ballast. And the goddess fair,
Calypso, brought meanwhile a web to make
The sail; and well he fashioned it; and sheets
And braces he attached, and needed gear.
With levers then he prised his vessel down,
And launched her into ocean's wide expanse.
'Twas the fourth day when all his work was done;
And on the fifth, Calypso from her isle
Dismissed him. Having laved him in a bath,
And clad in fragrant robes, the goddess then
Brought him a wine-skin full of dark red wine,
A water-skin much larger, and she filled
A leathern sack with food and put therein
Meats in abundance pleasant to the taste,
And sent for him a fair and balmy wind.
Rejoicing in the breeze the godlike man
Hoisted his sail, and like a seaman true,
Sat at the helm. And on his eye-lids sleep
Fell not, but still the Pleiades he watched,
Boötes, slow to set, and Arctus, called

The wain by some, which ever in his course
Watches Orion and in ocean's bath
Dips not. For this, Calypso, goddess fair,
Bade him keep on his left hand as he sped
Across the deep. So seventeen days he sailed,
And on the eighteenth loomed dim shadowy hills,
The land of the Phæakians, where its coast
Was nearest to him. Like a shield it seemed
Upon the hazy sea.—From Solyma's
Far-distant heights the mighty Earth-shaker
Spied him, a lonely mariner, as back
He came from Æthiopia's far-off land.
Hot anger filled his breast, and with a nod
Of his dread head he made this inward vow.
“I' st so? The gods then must have greatly changed
Their purpose towards Odysseus while I've been
Among the Æthiopians, for indeed
He's close to land where dwell Phæakian men,
And where his woes, (for such is fate's decree,)
Shall find an end. But now, I promise him,
I yet will drive him to his heart's content
On misery's path.” So saying, he heaped up
The clouds, and made commotion in the deep,
Trident in hand, and guided all the blasts
Of all the winds, and blotted out with clouds
Both land and sea ; and black as night it seemed.
The east wind and the south, and stormy west,
And sky-born north wind all their forces joined,

Rolling huge waves. And then Odysseus' limbs
And heart gave way, and in his troubled soul
He groaned: "Oh, wretched me; what's come at
last?"

I fear the goddess spoke too true a word,
Who told me I should have my fill of woe
On ocean's breast, ere ever I should see
My father-land; and now all comes to pass.
With such black clouds has Zeus the vault of heaven
O'erspread, so raised the sea, and sent the blasts
Of all the winds: my ruin now is sure!
Thrice happy are the Greeks, ay four times so,
Who perished on the spacious plain of Troy
To gratify the Atridæ. Would that fate
Had met me and I had died what time the spears
Of Trojan warriors all around me flew,
As o'er the corpse of Peleus' son I stood!
Then would my obsequies have been the care
Of Grecian comrades, and my glory great.
But now my lot is, by a wretched death
To be o'erwhelmed!" A prey to these laments,
A huge o'ertopping wave with fearful dash
Caught him, and shook his bark in every beam.
Far from his craft he found himself—his hand
No more the tiller held. An awful blast
Of mingling winds burst on him, then his mast
Was snapped, and far to leeward sail and yard
Drifted away. Long time beneath the wave

He struggled, nor could soon bear up against
The angry surge, for he was weightied with
The garments that divine Calypso gave.
At length his head emerged, and from his mouth
He spat the bitter brine which from his hair
Streamed down. But not e'en so, though sore
distressed,
Did he forget his bark ; but battling through
The waves, he seized her, and amidship clomb,
So shunning present death ; and to and fro
The mighty billows drove her. As along
The plain the autumn north wind drives the tufts
Of matted down of thistles, so the winds
Drove over ocean's breast Odysseus' craft.
The south wind would now send her to the north,
And now the east would yield her to the west
To be its sport. Him Ino noticed, slim
Of foot, Leucothea, child of Cadmus, once
Mortal with mortal voice, but who now shares
The honour of the gods in ocean's depths.
She pitied him, a miserable waif
Loaded with grief ; and rising from the sea
Flew like a gull, and settling on his bark,
Exclaimed : " Ill-fated man, say why hath so
The Earth-shaker, Poseidon, hated thee,
And heaped upon thee such a load of ill ?
Yet shall he not destroy thee, though indeed
He gladly would. But do exactly this ;

Thou dost not seem to be a witless man.
Strip off these garments and thy bark desert,
And give it to the winds, and with thy arms
Swimming, put forth thy utmost strength to gain
The land of the Phæakians, where thy life
Is safe. And this immortal mantle take
And bind beneath thy breast. No danger then
Of harm or death. But when thy arms shall grasp
The solid ground, unloose it and cast off
Into the wine-dark sea, far out from land,
And from it turn away." With words like these
The goddess gave the mantle, and at once
Into the seething deep she dipped as does
A sea-gull, and the dark waves covered her.
But doubted much the godlike suffering man
Who in deep trouble communed with himself.
"Ah me! may none of the immortals weave
A plot for me again in bidding me
My bark abandon! No such faith is mine,
Since with these eyes I've seen the land far off
Where, as 'tis said, a refuge I shall find.
But this I'll do, as seems to me the best.
So long as my ship's fastenings keep their hold,
I'll stay on board, and bear my load of woe;
But when she breaks up vanquished by the storm,
I'll swim, for then no other course remains."
As thus he ruminated in his breast,
Poseidon, Earth-shaker, a monster wave

Raised up: o'ertopping, awful, on it rushed,
And burst upon him. As a gusty wind
Catches a heap of chaff and scatters it
This way and that way, so the gale dispersed
His ship's long timbers. But upon one beam
Odysseus mounted, as a man bestrides
A courser, and from off his body tore
The garments that divine Calypso gave.
The mantle then he bound beneath his breast,
And on the deep fell prone with arms astretch
To swim his best. The mighty Earth-shaker
Saw him and tossed his head in wrath, and thus
Said to himself: "Roam now across the deep
In this wise, worn with many grievous ills,
Until thou mix with men beloved of Zeus;
But not e'en so wilt thou think light, I hope,
Of thy misfortune." Saying this he lashed
His smooth-maned horses, and to Ægæ came,
His famed abode. But in Athene's mind,
Daughter of Zeus, another purpose sprang.
She checked the raging of the other winds
And bade them cease and wholly be at rest,
But sent a driving north wind and smoothed down
The waves before it, that Odysseus so
Might reach the oar-loving Phæakians' shore,
And mix among them, shunning death and doom.
Two nights then, and two days he drifted o'er
The buoyant waves with death confronting him;

But when fair morning ushered in the third,
Then dropped the brisk breeze to a death-like calm,
And looking with keen eyes he saw the land
Not far away, as on a wave's huge back
He rode ; and like as children's hearts rejoice
At signs of health returning to their sire
When, by a grievous malady oppressed,
Long he has laid and pined, some demon foul
Possessing him, but whom the gods at length
Have freed from his affliction ; welcome so
Was to Odysseus sight of land and trees ;
And strenuously he swam to set his feet
Upon the solid ground. As on he toiled
Until his cry might reach it, then indeed
He heard the roar of breakers on the rocks,
And mighty waves that tumbled on the beach
With awful din, enwrapping all in foam.
For there no havens were that ships might seek,
Nor roadsteads, nought but jutting crags and rocks
Firm-bedded. And Odysseus felt his heart
And limbs give way, and in despondency
He communed with himself: " Ah me, when Zeus
Has granted against hope a glimpse of land,
And I have wrestled on and spanned this gulf,
Still am I prisoner on the hoary sea
With no way of escape, for rugged rocks
Fringe all the coast, and ceaseless breakers roar.
Sheer up the smooth rock runs, and close to shore

The sea is deep, and foothold there is none ;
Disaster's imminent. If I attempt
To land, a huge wave catching me may dash
Upon the stony reef my worn-out frame,
And make the effort fruitless. And if still
I swim along the coast in search of sands
Where shelter might be found, I greatly fear
Some sudden storm may snatch and drift me out
With heavy groans afar into the sea ;
Or that the god some monster of the deep
May send against me, of the progeny
Of Amphitrite famed, for well I know
How the great Earth-shaker hath hated me.”
While he thus pondered in his heart and mind,
A big wave dashed him on the rugged beach,
Where had been torn his skin, and crashed his bones,
Had not Athene, gleaming-eyed, a thought
Lodged in his breast. With frantic grasp he seized
A rock with both his arms, and clung to it
Groaning until the wave had run its course.
Unscathed he clung, but soon the refluent wave
Caught him and washed him far into the sea.
Like as when from its lurking-place is drawn
A polypus, and to its suckers cling
Pebbles in plenty, so the rugged rock
Tore his stout arms ; and in the deep o'erwhelmed
He vanished. Then indeed in wretchedness
Extreme, had died Odysseus, but that she

The goddess gleaming-eyed a happy thought
Inspired. Emerging from the wave about
To break upon the shore, he swam along
With eyes fixed on the land, if possibly
Some sheltered bay might offer to his view
Amid the sandy spits. But when he came
In swimming to the outflow of a stream
Pellucid, this place seemed to him the best
For landing, being free from harmful rocks,
And sheltered from the wind. The flowing stream
He recognized, and raised a heart-felt prayer :
“ Hear me, O king, whoe’er thou art, to thee
I come with much entreaty, fleeing from
Poseidon’s anger in the mighty deep.
E’en the immortal gods regard the man
Who comes a waif, as I now to thy stream
And knees approach, o’erborne with many woes.
Then pity me, O king, thy suppliant
I claim to be ! ” So said he, and at once
The river ceased his flow, and stilled his wave,
And made a calm before him, saving him
From his stream’s outdrift. Then he felt the ground
With both his knees and arms, for little life
Was left him by the sea, and all his flesh
Was swollen, and from nostrils and from mouth
Oozed out the brine ; and lacking breath and voice,
Powerless he lay, in dire exhaustion sunk.
But when at last his breath returned, and thoughts

Grew clear, the mantle which the goddess gave
He loosed and casting far into the flood,
Back to the sea a big returning wave
Bore it, and Ino caught it in her hands
Straightway. And he, withdrawing from the stream,
Bent down amid the reeds and lovingly
Kissed the fat earth. But still a prey to woe,
He meditated thus: "Unhappy I,
How much I suffer! what at last shall be
My fate? If by the river-side I pass
The painful night, I fear lest stinging frost
And drenching dew together quench my life,
The little that is left. Before the dawn
Keen blows the river breeze. And if I climb
The hill, and hiding in the brushwood dense,
Slumber among the bushes, (if indeed
Cold and out-worn I may,) and blessed sleep
O'ercome me, much I fear lest I should be
A godsend and a prey to savage beasts."
Then in his doubt this seemed the better way.
He clomb up to the wood above the stream
Whence he could see around; and crept beneath
Two bushes growing from one self-same root
Of olive, fruitful one, the other wild.
The moist winds never reached the hearts of these,
Nor did the sun's rays shine there, nor the rain
Penetrate through, so closely interwove
Were all their branches. Under them crept in

Odysseus. With his arms he soon upheaped
An ample bed of leaves, for they were strewn
Thick on the ground, and might have shielded well
Two men or three upon a winter's night,
Keen though the frost might be. On seeing them
Godlike Odysseus, much enduring man,
Was cheered, and on the bed he laid him down
Heaping the leaves above him. As when one
Has covered up a brand with ashes dark
In some lone place where neighbours there are none,
Keeping the spark alive when other fire
There is not ; so all buried among leaves
Odysseus lay. Athene o'er his eyes
Spread sleep, that from his grievous toil he soon
Might have repose and close his weary lids.

BOOK VI.



NAUSICAA.

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

BOOK VI.

So there reposed Odysseus, godlike man
Of many woes, with sleep and weariness
Weighed down. Meanwhile Athene sought the state
And city of Phæakians, who erst dwelt
In Hypereia's plains which bordered on
The land of the Cyclopians, insolent
And overbearing men, who plundered them,
Being the stronger. But Nausithous
The godlike, rising up, conducted them
From Hypereia to the Scherian isle,
Settling them there, from pirates far away ;
And for their city built encircling walls,
Erected houses, and neglected not
To build fair temples for the blessed gods,
And parcelled out in lots the tillage land.

But when at length he, yielding to his fate,
Had gone to Hades, ruled there in his place
Alkinous, blessed with counsel by the gods.
To his home hied Athene gleaming-eyed,
With mind intent upon the home-coming
Of great Odysseus. She the chamber sought
Much decked, where slept a maiden like the gods
In form and stature, named Nausicaa,
Daughter of high-minded Alkinous,
Attended by two maidens who might vie
In beauty with the Graces, one beside
Each door-post; and the shining doors were closed.
The maiden's couch she like a breath of wind
Approached, and took her place beside her head,
And gave her counsel in the well-known form
Of a maid, child of Dymas, seaman famed;
Young as herself and dearest to her heart.
Under this guise Athene gleaming-eyed
Addressed the princess: "How Nausicaa,
Could such a child from such a mother come,
So heedless art thou? All uncared for lie
Thy fine-spun garments, and thy marriage day
Is nigh, when thou thyself in rich array
Must be adorned, and give to those who come
To bring thee to thy home; for gifts like these
Disseminate 'mong men a good report,
And both the sire's and honoured mother's hearts
Are gladdened. So with breaking of the dawn

Let us go wash them, and I will attend
A helper, that the garments may be cleansed
Right speedily ; for 'tis not long, I think,
Thou'lt be a virgin. For e'en now the youths
Noblest among Phæakians, whose race
Is as thy own, are wooing thee. Come then,
Persuade thy father famed, before the dawn
To have equipped for thee his mules and wain,
To take thy sashes and soft coverlets
And ample robes ; and even for thyself
This would be better than to go afoot ;
Far from the city are the washing pools."'
This having said, Athene gleaming-eyed
Departed to Olympus, where they say,
The dwelling of the Gods is ever sure.
No hurricane disturbs it, nor does rain
E'er drench it, nor does winter's snow fall there ;
All cloudless is the sky, and everywhere
White lustre shines, wherein from day to day
The blessed gods delight. The gleaming-eyed
Thither betook herself when with the maid
Her words were ended. Soon the fair-throned Dawn
Came and awoke Nausicaa richly robed,
Whereon she wondered at the dream and left
Her room to go and tell her parents dear,
Her father and her mother whom she found
Within the mansion's walls. Her mother sat
Beside the hearth attended by her maids

Spinning sea-purple yarn. Her sire she met
Upon the threshold on his way to sit
In council with the nobles of the land
Who called him to preside. She stopping close
Before her father loved, addressed him thus :
“ Dear father, may I have a wain and team,
One that is high, smooth-running, to convey
My once bright garments to the river-side
For washing, for they're lying soiled with use.
And surely it is seemly for thyself
To wear clean raiment when thou sitt'st among
The nobles in the council. And thy sons
Five in this mansion born, two married men,
And three in youthful bloom, they always like
To go in fresh-washed raiment to the dance.
This matter lieth heavy on my mind.”
So said she, for she felt abashed to speak,
Of coming marriage to her father dear.
But he suspected all, and answered her :
“ I grudge thee neither mules, my child, nor aught
That thou may'st need ; so go thy way ; my men
Shall bring for thee a wain smooth-running, high,
And fitted with an awning.” Saying this
He hailed his men, who did as he desired,
Brought a smooth-running mule-wain, thereto yoked
The mules, and made all ready ; and the maid
Fetched from a room the clothing rich, and in
The bright wain stowed it. And her mother put

Into the wain-chest store of dainty food
Varied and ample, sauce thereto, and filled
With wine a goat's-skin ; and in golden flask
She gave her olive oil, that with her maids
Bathing, they might anoint themselves ; and then
Mounting the wain, the maiden took in hand
The reins, and seized the whip and drove away ;
Loud rang the trotting of the pair of mules.
Unflaggingly they sped and bore the clothes
And maid herself, but not alone, for rode
Her maidens with her. When at length they reached
The river's crystal stream and washing-pools,
Such as they wanted, and the water flowed
Clear and abundant for their cleansing work,
There they unloosed the mules from yoke and wain,
And drove them to the eddying river's bank
To crop the tender grass. And from the wain
They took the clothes by armsful to the pools,
Then steeped them in the water-dark, and trod
With rapid step in friendly rivalry.
And when they'd washed and cleansed them from all
 stains,
They spread them out in order on the shore,
Where most the waves had washed the pebbles up.
Then, bathing and anointing with pure oil
Their graceful limbs, they to the river's bank
Repaired to take refreshment ; and their clothes
They left to dry beneath the sun's hot rays.

And when her maidens and herself had ate
Their pleasant food, they sported with a ball,
Casting aside their veils ; and leading them,
White-armed Nausicaa her song began.
As Artemis the arrow-shooting maid
Descends some mountain, high Taygetus,
Or Erymanthus, in the ardent chase
Of boars or nimble deer, and with her sport
The Nymphs, the maids of ægis-bearing Zeus,
Who haunt the wilds ; and Leto's heart exults,
And over them she bears her head and brows,
And easily is recognized where all
Are fair ; so much Nausicaa excelled
Her fair attendants. But when came the time
For going homeward, and the mules were yoked,
And the bright garments folded, this thought filled
Athene's mind, the goddess gleaming-eyed ;
That from his lair Odysseus should arise
And see the bright-faced maid, and move her heart
To guide him to the city of the men
Phæakian, Then the princess threw the ball
At one of her attendants, but she missed
The maid, and in the deep and eddying pool
The ball was lost, and loudly screamed they all.
Odysseus then awoke and sitting up
Debated inwardly : " Unhappy I,
What kind of men are they whose land I've reached ?
Are they unbridled, fierce, and caring naught

For right, or do they love the stranger guest,
And do they fear the gods? Methinks a cry
Of girlish voices caught my ear, as 'twere
From Nymphs who haunt the lofty mountain heights,
And sources of the streams, and flowery meads!
Or am I near the sound of human voice?
Well, I will see and put it to the proof!"
So saying, 'mong the bushes dived divine
Odysseus, and with sturdy hands broke off
A thick-leaved branch to screen his nakedness.
Then went he as a lion mountain-bred
Goes self-reliant, heedless of the rain
Or wind, with eyes of fire, and bounds among
A flock of sheep, or oxen, or a herd
Of wild deer, when fell famine urges him
Seeking his prey to storm the well-fenced fold.
So did Odysseus dare to go among
The fair-haired maids despite his nakedness,
For want impelled him. Purple with the brine
He had a frightful look, and scared they fled
This way and that upon the jutting sands.
The daughter of Alkinous alone
Awaited his approach, for in her heart
Athene had put courage, and dispelled
All fear; and stopping, she confronted him.
Doubt moved Odysseus, whether he should clasp
The bright-faced maiden's knees, and aid implore,
Or standing where he was apart from her,

Entreat her with bland words to lead him to
The city, and some raiment to supply.
As he debated in his troubled mind,
It seemed to him the best to keep his place,
And with bland words entreat her, for he feared,
Clasping her knees, he might offend the maid.
Whereon with shrewd and flattering words he said :
“ I am thy suppliant, princess ; art thou now
Some goddess or a mortal ? If thou art
A goddess, some inhabitant of heaven,
Methinks thou most resemblest Artemis,
The child of mighty Zeus, in form and height
And noble nature. But if mortal thou,
Of those who dwell on earth, thrice happy are
Thy sire and honoured mother, and thrice blest
Thy brothers. Constantly their hearts are warmed
With pleasure when they see so rare a maid
Going to join the dance. But happiest he
Above all others who with nuptial gifts
Abundant, shall conduct thee to his home.
For never have I with these eyes beheld
Such mortal, man or woman. As I look
I'm lost in admiration. Once indeed
At Delos by Apollo's fane I saw
Such a young palm upshooting ; for I there
Came, with much following, on a journey fraught
With care and trouble. And as then I gazed
Long wondering on it, since from fruitful earth

Never had sprung such tree—so lady, thee
With wonder and amazement I behold,
And dare not clasp thy knees : but grievous woe
Oppresses me. Upon the twentieth day
I yesterday escaped the wine-dark sea,
And all the while the waves and pelting storms
Drifted me hither from Calypso's isle.
And now some god has cast me on this shore
Perchance that I here too may suffer woe ;
Nor can I hope for respite ere the gods
Accomplish all their purposes on me.
But, princess, pity me, for thee I've met
First in my sore distress ; of all the men
Who in this city and this land abide,
I know not one. So guide me to the town,
And grant some rag to clothe my nakedness ;
Perchance thou'st brought some wrapper for the
clothes.

And may the gods grant what thy heart desires,
Husband and home and sweet like-mindedness,
For naught on earth is lovelier than when
Husband and wife are one in heart and mind
To rule their house well ; to their enemies
Depressing, but to wellwishers a joy,
And most of all a comfort to themselves."

White-armed Nausicaa then answered him :
" Stranger, since vile thou seemest not to be
Nor witless, and the great Olympian Zeus

Himself deals out prosperity to men,
To good and bad according to his will ;
Perchance *he* hath these troubles sent to thee,
And thou must bear them patiently. But now,
Since to our city and our land arrived,
Naught shalt thou lack of raiment or of aught
That a much-suffering wanderer may need,
A suppliant. I will show thee how to find
The city, and make known its people's name.
Phæakians are they who own this land
And city ; daughter of Alkinous, I,
The lofty-souled who wields its might and force.”
She said, and to her fair-haired maids exclaimed :
“ Stand by me girls ; why when you saw the man
Took ye such fright ? can you indeed suppose
He comes with hostile purpose ? There lives not
The man with flesh and blood, nor shall there live
Who the Phæakians' land shall reach and bring
Warfare against it, for beloved are they
Of the immortals. Far away we dwell
In furthest ocean 'mid an angry sea,
Unvisited by other men at all.
But he, some wretched waif who's drifted here
Needs now our tendance ; for Zeus-sent are all
Strangers and poor ; and though a gift be small,
'Tis welcome. So my maidens, give our guest
Both food and drink, and lave him in the stream
Where from the wind 'tis screened.” So spake the
nymph,

And they obedient standing, passed the word
One to another, and Odysseus led
To where 'twas sheltered from the wind, as bade
Nausicaa, child of great Alkinous.
Near him a cloak and tunic they laid down
With other raiment, and in golden flask
They gave him soft pure oil and bade him in
The limpid current bathe. And then outspake
Godlike Odysseus to the waiting maids:
"Girls, stand ye there apart while I myself
Wash the brine from my shoulders, and with oil
Anoint my limbs; for long indeed it is
Since my skin so was softened. I like not
To wash before you; for I am ashamed,
Unclad to come amid you fair-haired maids."
So said he, and they went apart, and told
The nymph. And great Odysseus washed away
The brine on his broad shoulders and his back
Encrusted. From his head the salt sea foam
He wiped, and when his cleansing was complete,
And his anointing done, and he had donned
The raiment which the noble virgin gave,
The child of Zeus, Athene, made him seem
Taller and plumper, and upon his head
Shed curly locks like hyacinthine flowers.
As when a craftsman skilled who learnt his art
From Pallas or Hephæstus, streaks with gold
A silver vessel, and completes a work

A joy to see, so showered Athene grace
Upon his head and shoulders. Then he went
And sat apart upon the ocean's shore
Glistening with grace and beauty. And the nymph
Saw him with wonder. Then her fair-haired girls
She thus addressed: "Attend, my white-armed maids,
I'll tell you something. Not against the will
Of all the Olympian gods does this man come
'Mong us Phæakians ; though at first to me
He seemed an outcast wretch, he now is like
The gods whose dwelling is the spacious heaven.
Would that so rare a man were called my spouse,
And dwelling here, and that his choice might be
Here to abide ! but maidens, give our guest
Both food and drink." So said she, and they heard,
And with obedience prompt before him placed
The food and drink. And ravenously ate
And drank Odysseus, suffering, godlike man.
Then in Nausicaa's mind, the white-armed maid,
Another thought arose. The raiment bright
Folding she placed upon the well-wrought wain,
And yoked the strong-hoofed mules, and took her
seat
Herself, and called, and with these friendly words
Aroused Odysseus: " Rise now, stranger, come
Hie to the town, that to my noble sire's
Abode I may direct thee ; where, I think,
Thou'lt meet the foremost of Phæakian men.

But do just as I tell thee, for thou seem'st
By no means witless. Whilst we're 'mid the fields
And farmers' labours, follow close the mules
And wain with my attendants, and I'll lead
The way. But when the city we approach
With its high circling wall, and haven fair
On either side, with narrow way between,
Where on each beach the shapely craft are drawn,
(For every one has his allotted slip,)
And where the agora is, with walls of stone
Huge and deep-bedded, and Poseidon's fane
Shines in the midst, and where their dark ships' stores
Are housed, their sails and cordage, where they shape
Their taper oars; (for our Phæakian men
Care not for bows or quivers, but they love
Masts and their gallant ships with well-poised oars
Wherein with pride they cross the hoary sea :)
There carefully avoid their ill-report
Lest we be blamed hereafter; for among
The crowd are many captious men, and one
Of baser soul when meeting us might say :
' Who is this stranger tall, of noble mien
Following Nausicaa? Where found she him?
Perchance he'll be her husband! Brings she some
Sea-rover hither from a distant land,
For there are none such near? Or has some god
Come down from heaven in answer to her prayers
To be her loving spouse while life shall last?

Tis better if in going to and fro
Some stranger she hath found to be her spouse,
For truly doth she spurn Phæakian youths,
Though many are her suitors of account
Among the people.' Such will be their talk,
And this would be a cause of blame to me.
I too would blame another who should do
Such thing, who having not the leave of sire
Or mother dear, should company with men
Before the coming of her wedding day.
Stranger, take in my meaning! soonest thus
Shalt thou prevail upon my sire to grant
Safe conduct for thee to thy father-land.
By the wayside thou'lt find Athene's grove
Of shining poplars; therein flows a fount
Watering a mead close by my father's park
And budding orchard; from the city not
More distant than the voice of man might reach.
There sit and wait awhile, and give us time
To gain the city and my father's house.
And when thou deemest we have entered it,
Then come to the Phæakians' town and ask
Where is the mansion of my noble sire
Alkinous: it is not hard to find,
A little child could lead thee there; for not
Like mere Phæakian houses the abode
Of great Alkinous. But when thou art
Within the court, pass very quickly through

The great hall, till thou find my mother where
She sits beside the brightly blazing hearth
Spinning sea-purple wool, a sight to see,
Resting against a pillar, while her maids
Behind her sit. And there my father's seat
Is by her side, whereon he sits and quaffs
Wine like a god. Go past him and thine arms
Throw round my mother's knees, that thou with joy
May'st quickly see the day of thy return
Unto thy longed-for home, though far away.
If she should favour thee, thou well mayst hope
To reach thy father-land and see again
Thy well-built mansion and thy loving friends."'
So saying, with her shining whip she lashed
The mules, and soon the stream was left behind,
And well they trotted on with prancing steps.
But she drove slowly that her maids on foot
And great Odysseus might keep pace with her,
Driving with skill. The sun was going down
When to Athene's sacred grove they came.
There stopped the godlike man, and sitting down
Sent up his prayer to mighty Zeus's child:
"Hear me, thou child of ægis-bearing Zeus,
Unwearied one! O listen to me now!
Since thou wast sometime deaf unto my prayers,
When by the famous Earthshaker's assaults
I was o'erwhelmed; now grant that I may find
Favour with the Phæakians, and take

Pity upon me !” So he, praying, spake.
Pallas Athene heard, but ventured not
To show her presence plainly, loth to vex
Her father’s brother who in fury stormed
Against Odysseus ere he reached again
His father-land.

BOOK VII.



ALKINOÛS AND ARETE.

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

BOOK VII.

As there the godlike much-enduring man
Odysseus prayed, the maiden to the town
The pair of mules bore on, and when at length
She reached the well-known palace of her sire,
She stopped before the door, and round her came
Her god-like brothers ; from the wain they loosed
The mules, and carried in the raiment fair.
She to her chamber went wherein a fire
Was burning, kindled by an aged dame,
Eurymedusa, guardian of her room,
Brought from Apeire in the round-hulled ships
In days gone by, and chosen as a prize
For great Alkinous, because he ruled
All the Phæakian tribes, and as a god
Was listened to. She in the maiden's home
Fostered white-armed Nausicaa ; and now

The fire alight, she set out in the room
The evening meal. And then Odysseus rose
And to the city walked. But in her care
For him, Athene spread a mist around
His person, lest some proud Phæakian churl
Meeting him might insult him, and inquire
Who he might be. But when he was about
To enter the fair city, met him there
Athene, goddess gleaming-eyed, indued
With maiden's form, and bearing on her head
A pitcher; and confronting him she stopped,
And thus Odysseus godlike questioned her:
"Girl, canst thou lead me to the house where dwells
Alkinous, ruler of the people here?
For I'm a stranger and have hither come
Through sufferings many from a far off land,
And not a single man know I among
Your many citizens." And answered him
Athene, goddess gleaming-eyed: "I then
Will show thee at thy bidding, stranger friend,
His mansion; for indeed he dwells hard by
My blameless father's house; but go thou so,
In silence, and I'll make myself thy guide.
And look not thou at any man, nor speak;
For these our people like not stranger men,
And have no love for one who comes to them
From other lands. At home in their swift ships,
They cross the mighty deep, (the Earthshaker

.

Befriending them,) in barks that skim the wave
Like flight of bird or thought." This said, the maid
Pallas Athene led the way in haste,
And after her went he, but all unseen
By seagoing Phæakians as he walked
Amid them to the city; for so willed
Athene, goddess dread, who in her care,
With wondrous mist concealed him from their view.
Odysseus with astonishment beheld
The havens, and the even-sided ships,
The agora of the people, and its walls
Lofty and strong with bristling palisades,
A wonder to behold. But when at length
They reached the famous palace of the king,
Athene, goddess gleaming-eyed, began:
"This, honoured stranger, is the house which thou
Wouldst have me show: the chieftains of high birth
Thou wilt find feasting there; but pass within
And have no fear: for better does the man
Of daring bring about his wished for ends,
Although he be a stranger. In the hall
First wilt thou find the lady of the house—
Arete is her name; her ancestry
The same whence sprung the King Alkinous.
Poseidon, Earth-shaker, and Peribæa
Were parents of Nausithoüs, fairest she
Of women, youngest daughter of the great
Eurymedon, who o'er the Giants proud

Once ruled. But by his means the wicked race
Perished, and he too died, and with her joined
In love Poseidon and begat a son,
Nausithoüs, chief among Phæakian men.
Nausithoüs again begat two sons,
Rhexenor and Alkinous, the first
While yet without a son, with silver bow
Apollo slew, at home in youthful prime,
Leaving an only child, Arete named.
Her did Alkinous make his wife, and held
In honour as no other wife on earth
Is honoured of all women who now rule
Men's households. So is she most highly prized
By her loved children, by Alkinous
Himself, and by the people in whose eyes
She seems a goddess, and who welcome her
When she goes through the city. For she hath
A lucid judgment, and when so inclined
She settles quarrels even between men.
If she should think it well to favour thee,
Then mayst thou hope to see again thy friends,
And gain thy high-roofed house and fatherland."
So saying, gleaming-eyed Athene sped
Across the waste of waters, Scheria fair
Leaving behind, and came to Marathon,
And wide-wayed Athens, in Erectheus' fane
Ending her journey. And Odysseus then
Went to the famed house of Alkinous.

But many troubled thoughts disturbed his mind
There standing, ere the brazen entrance sill
He crossed. For like the splendour of the sun
Or of the moon, the lofty-roofed abode
Of great Alkinous shone. Upon its walls
From front to back were bands of burnished brass,
And crowning all, the cornice was of blue,
And golden doors the stately entrance closed.
Firm in the brazen threshold stood the posts
Of silver, and the lintel on their tops
Was silver too, but golden was the latch.
On either side in silver and in gold
Were dogs, Hephæstus' cunning workmanship,
Guarding the home of great Alkinous ;
Immortal they, and never growing old.
And round the walls were seats at intervals
All through, well-cushioned with the fine-spun work
Of women. There the nobles of the land
Were sitting, feasting to their hearts' content.
And golden youths on solid pedestals
Stood holding torches in their hands to light
At night the feasters in the lofty hall.
And fifty women servants thronged the house ;
Some in the hand-mills ground the golden grain ;
Some plied the loom, or sitting, spun the yarn,
Stirring like leaves on soaring poplar trees ;
While from the close-wove linen web stole down
Fine limpid oil. For as Phæakian men

Excel all others in the seaman's art
Of handling ships upon the barren deep,
So are their women skilful at the loom ;
For gleaming-eyed Athene gifted them
With understanding hearts, and skill to ply
All beauteous work. Outside the court and near
The gates, an orchard of four acres lay,
And round it ran a fence on every side.
There flourished giant trees, pomegranate, pear,
And glossy-fruited apple, and sweet fig,
And olive fat. No lack of fruit have these
Winter or summer through the fleeting year ;
But Zephyr, ever blowing, swells out some
And ripens other. Pear succeeds to pear,
Apple to apple ; grape succeeds to grape,
And fig to fig. And there his vineyard smiles ;
A smooth plot here, whereon beneath the sun
They dry the grapes, and here they gather in
The heavy clusters, or the juice tread out.
In front of these the setting fruit has shed
Its withered blossom, and the more advanced
Is purpling : and beyond the furthest row
Are beds of flowers in gay profusion bright.
Two copious springs are there, and one of them
Spreads through the garden its reviving stream ;
The other stream supplies the mansion's needs,
Crossing the court, whereto the citizens
Come for their water. Such the gods' rich gifts

Showered on the palace of Alkinous.
There stood Odysseus, much-enduring man,
Agaze, and when his mind had grasped the whole,
He quickly crossed the threshold and went in.
And there he found Phæakian counsellors
And chiefs, who from their cups libations poured
In honour of the keen-eyed Argus-slayer,
To whom it was their wont to offer last
Ere they retired to rest. But through the hall
On went Odysseus, shrouded in the mist
Spread by Athene, till he came before
Arete and Alkinous the king.
And round Arete's knees Odysseus threw
His arms, and then the hiding mist dispersed,
And seeing the man plainly in the hall,
They gazed in silent wonder. Then his prayer
Odysseus made: "O great Rhexenor's child,
Arete, after many toils I come
A suppliant to thy knees, and to the king,
And to your guests, to whom may happiness
Be granted by the gods, and length of life!
And may each to his sons transmit the wealth
Stored in his house, and what the people give!
But find for me the means to see again
My fatherland; for long time far away
From those I love I've suffered grievous woe."
So saying he sat down beside the hearth
Amid the ashes, and a silence dead

Spread over all. At length the hero old,
Echeneus spoke, of all Phæakian chiefs
The oldest, who in eloquence excelled,
And ancient lore, and with persuasive words
Addressed them : "'Tis not for the best, O king,
Nor seemly for a stranger thus to sit
Among the ashes on the floor beside
The hearth ; and these here waiting for thy word
Are loth to speak. Raise thou the stranger up,
And seat him in a silver-studded chair,
And do thou bid the heralds mix the wine,
That we may make libations to the lord
Of thunder, Zeus, the modest suppliants' friend ;
And let the house-dame give our guest a meal
Of what she has at hand." And when the king
Alkinous heard, he took Odysseus' hand,
And raised him from the hearth, and seated him
Upon a shining chair, and made to rise
His manly son Laodamas whose seat
Was near his own, and whom he loved the most.
A servant then brought water in a jug
Of gold, rich wrought, and poured it on his hands
Over a silver bowl, and towards him drew
A table bright. Soon came the house-dame good,
Bringing and setting out a rich repast :
A favourite she with King Alkinous' guests.
When the long-suffering, godlike man had ate
And drunk, Alkinous to the herald said :

“Pontonous, prepare a bowl of wine,
And deal to all these present in the hall ;
That we may pour to Zeus, the lightning’s lord,
Helper of humble suppliants.” Thus he said,
And straight Pontonous mixed the sweetened wine,
And dealt it out to all in order due.
And when, libations made, they’d drunk what each
Desired, Alkinous addressed his guests :
“Hear me, Phæakian counsellors and chiefs,
And I will tell the promptings of my mind.
The banquet ended, seek ye now your homes
And take your rest ; and when the morning comes
We’ll summon yet more of the leading men,
And give an entertainment in the hall
To this our guest, and offer to the gods
Unblemished sacrifices, and will then
Be mindful of his escort, how our guest
Without or pain or trouble by our aid
May reach his fatherland and soon have joy,
Though distant far it be ; and how no harm
Or suffering may befall him on his way,
Until he land upon his native shore.
Then and there must he bear the lot that Fate
And the stern Spinners span when they drew out
His thread of life, and first he saw the light.
But if ’tis an immortal hath come down
From heaven, methinks some purpose of the gods
Is in it. For the gods in days gone by

Made plain their presence with us, honouring
Our costly hecatombs, and at the feast
Sitting among us. And if one, though but
A lonely wayfarer, should meet with them,
They hide not, for to them we are allied
As the Cyclopians are, and that wild race
Of Giants." And the man of many arts,
Odysseus answered him: "Alkinous,
Let thy mind turn itself to other thoughts,
For naught have I of likeness to the gods,
Dwellers in heaven's expanse; resembling them
Neither in form nor stature, but I'm one
Of mortal men, and whom ye know as most
O'erborne by woe, my trouble equals theirs.
Yea I might tell yet more of evils dire,
All of the gods' infliction, but distressed
As now ye see me, let me have my fill
Of food, for naught in shamelessness exceeds
A craving belly, and its urgency
Wont be forgotten though a man be worn
With care and grief of heart as I am now.
It ever urges me to eat and drink,
And making me forgetful of my woes,
Claims to be filled. But with to-morrow's dawn
I pray bestir yourselves to find for me
Unhappy man, safe conduct to my home,
Wretch though I be. Then time may end for me
When I have seen my wealth, my serving maids,

And spacious high-roofed house." So spake the man,
And all approved, desiring for their guest
Safe conduct, since he'd spoken sensibly.
And when, libations poured, they'd drunk till all
Were satisfied, they to their homes repaired
To take repose. But in the hall was left
Godlike Odysseus, and there sat with him
Arete and Alkinous like a god
In figure. And the serving men removed
The remnants of the feast. And then began
White-armed Arete, for she recognised
The cloak, the tunic and the garments fair
Which she with her attendant maids had wrought,
And with these winged words accosted him :
" Stranger, I will myself first put to thee
This question ; what man art thou and whence come ?
And who this raiment gave thee ? Saidst thou not
Thou cam'st a roamer hither o'er the deep ? "
And answered her Odysseus sage and said :
" It would be hard, O queen, to tell at length
My troubles, for the gods who dwell in heaven
Have sent me many, but I'll speak of this,
That, causing wonder, prompted thy request.
A certain isle, Ogygia, lies apart
Far out to sea where dwells Calypso dread,
Daughter of Atlas, crafty goddess fair.
Nor has she any spouse among the gods
Or mortal men. But me, unhappy one,

Some god brought to her dwelling all alone,
When Zeus had launched his thunder-bolt and
wrecked

My swift ship on the wine-dark sea's broad breast.
Then perished all my comrades brave, but I
With arms around my ruined vessel's keel,
Drifted nine days, and on the tenth dark night
The gods made me to reach Ogygia's shore
Where dwells fair-haired Calypso, goddess dread.
She took me to her home and cherished me
Loving me from her heart, and vowed I ne'er
Should see old age, but live a deathless life.
But never could I put belief in her.

There seven years kept I firm, and with my tears
The raiment constantly bedewed, that fair
Calypso gave me. But at length when came
The eighth revolving year, she, rousing me,
Bade me depart; moved by some message sent
By Zeus, or by some change in her own mind:
And on a well-bound bark she sent me off
With plenteous gifts of food and luscious wine,
And with immortal raiment vested me,
And caused a fair and gentle breeze to blow.
For seventeen days sped I across the sea,
And on the eighteenth loomed before mine eyes
Your island's shadowy mountains, and my heart
Was glad, though hard my fate, for I was doomed
Yet to encounter much calamity,

The doing of Poseidon, Earth-shaker ;
Who raised the angry winds, and barred my way,
And heaved up mightily his stormy waves,
And dashed me, deeply groaning, from my bark,
And broke her up. But swimming, I my head
Yet above water kept till wind and wave
Drifted me to your shore. Whereon when I
Would land, a billow caught and hurried me
Against a hard rock on a rugged coast.
But drawn back with the refluent wave, again
I swam until I came to where outflows
The river, and this seemed the easiest place,
Free'st from rocks and sheltered from the wind.
Stepping ashore there, down I sank until
My heart revived and night ambrosial came.
Leaving the heaven-fed stream I sought repose
Among the bushes, gathering for my couch
A heap of leaves. And o'er the spacious earth
The god sent sleep. There, buried in the leaves,
And sorrow-stricken, through the night I slept,
And on to dawn and noon. But when the sun
Was westering, sweet sleep deserted me,
And on the shore I saw thy daughter's maids
At play, and she herself was in their midst,
In grace a goddess. Then in suppliant guise
I claimed her help ; and nothing did she lack
Of firm right mindedness, as one would scarce
Expect to meet with in so young a maid ;

For oft young girls give way to silliness.
She gave me ample food and sparkling wine,
And washed me in the stream, and lent these robes.
Burdened at heart I yet have told the truth
In this." And answered him Alkinous
And said: "My daughter, stranger, has not thought
Aright herein, not bringing thee to me
Among her maids, and thou her suppliant."
Wary Odysseus answered him and said;
"Alkinous, do not thou for this reproach
The blameless girl, for she instructed me
To follow with the maids, but I declined,
Fearful of shame, lest seeing me by chance,
Thy heart should be indignant, for we men
Are everywhere a very touchy race."
And then again Alkinous replied:
"Stranger, there's no such heart within my breast
As would be angry foolishly, but best
Always is moderation. For I would—
O father Zeus, Athene and Apollo—
Being, a man like-minded with myself,
Thou had'st my daughter, and could'st bear the name
Of son-in-law, abiding here with us;
And I would give thee house and land and wealth
If thou wouldst stay here willingly, for none
Of us Phæakians would detain thee here
Against thy will. Forbid it father Zeus!
To-morrow, be assured I will appoint

A well-manned ship, and when o'ercome with sleep
Thou liest, they shall row thee in the calm,
And bring thee to thy father-land and home,
If that is thy desire, although these be
More distant far than is Eubæa's shore,
Remotest land of all, as say our men
Who saw it, bringing Rhadamanthus there
To judge the deeds of Tityus, Gaia's son.
In the same day they went and ended all
Their mission without trouble and returned
Back to their home. So thou thyself shalt see,
And know how much my ships and crews excel
In sweeping with their oars the barren sea."
Thus spake he, and Odysseus godlike man,
Much suffering, rejoiced, and praying said:
"Grant, father Zeus, Alkinous may perform
All he has vowed, and grant him endless fame
Ruling a fruitful land, and may I come
Back to my fatherland!" So they discoursed
Of these things. And Arete, white-armed, called
Her maids to place a couch beneath the porch,
And make it soft with fine-spun purple rugs,
Spread with a coverlet, and over all
Throw woollen cloaks for warmth. Then from the
hall
Went forth the women lighted by a torch
Upborne. And when in busy haste they'd spread
The grateful coverings, they called and bade

Odysseus come : " Rise, stranger, take thy rest,
Thy bed is ready." So they said, and rest
To him was very welcome. So there slept
Godlike Odysseus, much enduring man,
On inlaid couch beneath the echoing porch.
And in his lofty mansion's inmost room
Reposed Alkinous and his queenly wife
On restful couch adjusted by her hands.

BOOK VIII.



ODYSSEUS AMONG THE
PHÆAKIANS.

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

BOOK VIII.

When mist-born rosy-fingered Dawn stole on,
Rose from his couch Alkinous in his strength ;
And rose too great Odysseus, ravager
Of cities. And Alkinous led the way
To the Phæakians' agora, where beside
The ships 'twas held. And entering, they sat
On seats of polished marble side by side.
Pallas Athene planning the return
Of high-minded Odysseus, went amongst
The citizens, in semblance herald she
Of wise Alkinous ; and whom she met
She thus accosted : “ Come, ye counsellors
And chiefs Phæakian, to the agora come,
And learn about the stranger lately at
The dwelling of Alkinous arrived,

Sea waif, but like to the immortal gods!"
So saying she aroused the interest
Of each; and soon the agora and its seats
Were crowded with a multitude of men.
And many saw and wondering gazed upon
Laertes' far-famed son. And on his head
And shoulders something more than mortal grace
Athenes shed, and made him in their eyes
Taller and stouter; so might he be loved
By all Phæakians with fear and awe,
And be a victor in the manly games
Wherein Phæakians would Odysseus prove.
And when they'd gathered and the square was full,
Alkinous, rising in their midst began:
"Hear me, Phæakian counsellors and chiefs,
While I explain the promptings of my heart
Within my breast! This stranger, who he is
I know not—to my house has wandering come,
Perchance from far off land, or east or west.
He begs we'll give him help upon his way,
And make it certain. Let us then, as is
Our custom, give to him the aid he needs;
For no one coming underneath my roof,
Abides there long in sorrow, waiting for
Furtherance upon his way. Then let us launch
Into the mighty sea a dark-hulled ship
First of the fleet, and choose among the crowd
Of those whose seamanship has proved the best,

Fifty and two young men. When they have made
The oars and benches ready, let them land.
Then coming to my house, prepare for them
A hasty meal, and I will give enough
For all. This for the young men I enjoin.
But to my mansion bright ye other chiefs,
Bearers of sceptres, come, that we may give
Fair entertainment to our guest therein !
And let not one decline, and summon ye
Demodocus, whose song is like a god's.
For surely 'tis a god has given him
To charm with song whene'er his soul is stirred."'
This said he took the lead and followed him
The sceptre-bearing chiefs. The minstrel sweet
A herald went to seek. And as was bid,
The two and fifty chosen youths went down,
And sought the margin of the barren deep.
And having gone down to the ship and sea,
They launched the vessel into ocean's deeps,
Shipping the mast and sail, and in the thongs
Of leather slipped the oars as seamen should ;
And bent the snowy sail, and moored the bark
Out in the offing. Landing then they went
And sought the mansion of Alkinous.
There filled were all the corridor and house,
And court with the assembled multitude ;
For many were they, both young men and old.
Twelve sheep Alkinous slew for them, and eight

White-tuskèd swine, and oxen two with tread
Heavy and rolling. These they flayed and dressed,
Making a welcome feast. The herald then
Drew near and brought with him the minstrel sweet,
The favourite of the Muse, who dealt to him
Both good and ill; bereaving him of sight,
She gave him sweetest song. For him forthwith
Pontonous placed among the banqueters
A silver-studded seat, where he might lean
Against a column tall. And on a peg
Above his head he hung his fine-toned lyre,
The herald guiding him to reach to it;
And at his side he placed a basket fair,
And table, and a cup of wine thereon
To drink when he inclined. Then on the feast
Before them spread, the guests laid willing hands.
And when desire for food and drink was gone,
The Muse inspired the minstrel to exalt
The deeds of heroes in the song whose fame
Has risen to wide heaven; the fateful strife
Between Odysseus and the mighty son
Of Peleus, how they once with awful words
Contended at a banquet of the gods.
And Agamemnon, king of men, at heart
Was glad when strove the noblest of the Greeks.
For so Apollo spake to him in words
Oracular, in hallowed Pytho's fane,
When going to consult him he stepped o'er

The marble threshold. And from that time forth
Disaster was evolved alternately
To Trojans and to Greeks through counsel deep
Of mighty Zeus. This sang the minstrel famed ;
And then Odysseus took his ample cloak
Of purple dye, and with a sinewy grasp
Drew it across his head and hid from sight
His noble face, because he would not have
Phæakians see the tears that forced their way.
And when the godlike minstrel ceased his song,
Wiping away the tears, he pushed his cloak
Back from his head, and taking up his cup
Two-bowled, he made libation to the gods.
But when the minstrel recommenced his song,
Called for again by the Phæakian chiefs
Because it pleased them well, Odysseus soon,
Again his forehead veiling, groaned aloud.
His weeping by the rest was unobserved,
Alkinous only saw and noticed it.
He sitting near him, heard his deep drawn sigh,
And straight to the Phæakians exclaimed,
Whose ships were their delight : " Attend to me
Phæakian chiefs and counsellors ; we now
Have had enough of music of the lyre
Which lends to an abundant feast its grace ;
Let us now go outside and try our skill
In games of all kinds, that our guest his friends
May tell, on his return, how much we are

Before all others in the boxing art,
In wrestling, and in leaping, and in speed
Of foot." So having said, he led the way,
And all went after him. And on the peg
The herald hung the lyre of sweetest tone,
Took by the hand Demodocus, and from
The house conducted him along the road
Whereon the chiefs Phæakian had gone
To see the manly feats. To the agora
They went, and followed them a trooping crowd
By thousands. And stood up to join the lists
Many young men and brave: Acroneus,
Okyalus and Elatreus stood up,
Nauteus and Prynneus and Anchialus,
Ponteus and Proreus, Anabesineus,
Thoön, and Amphialus from Tecton sprung
Through Polyneüs; stood Euryalus
The son of Naubolus, in fight a match
For Ares man-slayer, the handsomest
Of all Phæakians in face and form,
After the faultless prince Laodamas.
Stood up three sons of great Alkinous,
Laodamas and Clytoneüs and
Halius the godlike. These were first to run
In foot-race. From the starting line the course
Stretched right away: and off they quickly flew
Raising a cloud of dust upon the plain.
But blameless Clytoneüs far excelled

The rest in speed : and as in furrow long
A pair of mules plough more than oxen do,
So was he best in running, and came in
Among the people, leaving far behind
The others. Then in a tough wrestling match
They tried their skill. In it Euryalus
Was better than the best. Amphialus
In leaping was the foremost man of all.
In quoit throwing by far the skilfullest
Was Elatreus ; and in a boxing match
Laodamas was victor, noble son
Of King Alkinous. And when they all
Were gratified, and ended were the sports,
Laodamas addressed them : “ Come my friends,
Let us the stranger ask if he has learnt
And knows some manly sport : for he is not
Ill-favoured in his thighs and legs nor in
His arms above, his firm-set neck, and his
Abundant strength. Nor lacks he ought of youth,
But he is broken down with many ills.
For I aver there’s nothing like the sea
To take the life and spirit from a man,
Even a very strong one.” Answered him
Euryalus and said : Laodamas,
Right are thy words ; do thou thyself now go
And call him forth ! and when the noble son
Of King Alkinous heard, he went and stood
Among them all, and to Odysseus said :

“Come now, much honoured guest, and join the lists,
If thou perchance art skilled in any games,
Thou lookest like a man well versed in them ;
For there’s no greater glory for a man
In life than are the feats he can perform
With foot and arm. So come and try thy skill,
And scatter to the winds thy heavy cares.
And no long time thy journey will be stayed ;
E’en now the ship is launched and all her crew
Are ready.” And Odysseus warily
Answered him : “ Why, Laodamas, dost thou
Reproaching urge me thus ? my cares weigh more
Upon my soul than thought of manly sports,
So many have I borne in days gone by,
So much have toiled ; and in your agora now
I sit with longings for my prompt return,
Praying the King and people for their aid.”
Then answered him Euryalus, and cast
Scorn on him openly. “ Thou’rt no way like,
Stranger, to one expert in manly games
Such as are loved by warriors ; but more
Like one who in a ship of many oars
Plies to and fro, the leader of a crew
Of merchant-sailors, cargo-minding men,
Ever alert for freight and ill-won gain :
No athlete art thou.” And with stern regard
Odysseus, man of many counsels, said :
“ Stranger, thou speak’st not well : thou seem’st like
one

Of little thought. Not thus to any man
Do the gods grant *all* gifts—a presence good
And wisdom, and smooth eloquence. For one
Is mean to look at, but the god has crowned
His homeliness with words; and those who hear,
Gaze on him with delight. With modesty
He utters happy and persuasive words,
And stands the foremost man among the crowd,
Who as he walks along the city's streets
Revere him as a god. Another man
In mien is like the immortals, but this grace
Has not the crown of fluency of words.
So thou in form art showy; e'en a god
Would not have fashioned thee in other shape,
But empty-minded art thou. All my soul
Within my breast thou stirrest, speaking words
At random. Not untaught am I in games
As thou affirmest, but I claim to have been
Among the foremost while I trusted in
My youth and strength of arm, but now I have
A weight of pain and woe. For much I've borne
Both in the battle field and when I've tried
The dismal waves. But though I've suffered much
In many ways, I'll join the lists with thee,
For thy words cut my heart, and uttering them
Thou rousest me." He said, and starting up
With cloak and all, he went and took a quoit
Larger and thicker, and more massive far

Than those Phæakians in their matches use.
Whirling as from his stalwart hand it flew,
Loud hummed the stone, and downward to the ground
Crouched the Phæakians, lovers of the oar,
Famed seamen, startled by its impetus.
Far flew the quoit beyond all other casts
Out of his hand with ease. Athene like
A man in figure, marked the range, and said,
With friendly words: "A blind man might by touch
Discover, stranger, where thy quoit has flown,
For it is not among the crowd of quoits,
But much the foremost; be thou confident
About this contest; no Phæakian man
Can cast his quoit so far, much less beyond."
So said she, and Odysseus, godlike man
Of many woes, rejoiced, right glad because
He saw a friendly man upon the ground;
And then with lighter heart he cried aloud
'Mid the Phæakians; "Match now this, young men,
And soon I think I'll hurl another such,
Or even heavier. Of the rest, who'er
Has heart and spirit for it, let him come
And try, (for ye have greatly angered me.)
Be it a boxing or a wrestling match,
Or foot-race, I will shrink not to contend
With any one except Laodamas,
For he's my entertainer. Who would with
His host contend? Both witless is the man

And worthless, who would challenge in the sports
Him who receives him in a far strange land,
Cutting off all advantage to himself.
But of the rest, there's no one I refuse
Or slight, but I would prove them and be proved
Openly. For I am not inexpert
In manly sports. Well know I how to stretch
The polished bow, and should be first to hit
A man amid a crowd of enemies,
Though many comrades round about me stood,
Skilled archers. Philoctetes only was
Before me with the bow in Troia's land,
When we Achaians put ourselves to proof.
Of all the rest of men upon the earth
And feeding on its fruits, I boast that I
Was far the foremost. But I venture not
To match myself with men of former days,
Either with Heracles, or Eurytus
The Æchalian, who in bowmanship once dared
To vie with e'en the immortals: and for this
An early death took mighty Eurytus,
Nor did he in his mansion reach old age.
For in his wrath Apollo smote him when
He challenged him to prove his archer skill.
I with my hand can hurl a dart as far
As others with the bow. I fear alone
Lest in the foot-race I may be surpassed
By some Phæakian. For upon the wave

I've suffered many hardships, cramped within
My ship's small compass ; and by this my legs
Have lost their nimbleness." Odysseus said,
And all were voiceless, and Alkinous
Alone made answer : " Stranger, not without
Acceptance dost thou tell these things to us,
Wishing to evidence the manliness
Which is thine ornament, (incensed because
This man hath openly cast scorn on thee,)
So that no one who knoweth in his heart
To speak judiciously, may dare to blame
Thy prowess. But come now and learn from me,
(That thou mayst also to another tell,
Some hero comrade, when beneath thy roof
Thou banquetest together with thy wife
And children,) of our virtues and what deeds
Zeus hath committed to us, handed down
From days ancestral. For we are not skilled
In boxing or in wrestling, but we run
With nimble feet, and foremost are of all
In seamanship ; and our delight is in
Banquet and harp and dance and frequent change
Of raiment, in warm bathing and in ease
On couches. Come then, ye who are the best
Among Phæakian dancers, lead ye off,
That so our guest may tell his friends at home
How much we are before all other men
In seamanship and speed of foot and in

Dances and song." * * * * *

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And then Alkinous bade
 Laodamas and Halius to dance
 Alone, since no one could contend with them.
 And when they'd taken in their hands a ball
 Fair-wrought and purple, work of Polybus,
 One threw it high in air, with back inclined,
 The other, springing upward from the ground,
 Caught it with ease before his feet again
 Came to the earth. And having shown their skill
 In this way, then upon the fruitful land
 They danced with rapid interchange of ball,
 And other youths beat time, as close at hand
 They stood; and not a little din arose.
 At length Odysseus, godlike man, addressed
 Alkinous; "Of all men famed the most,
 Noble Alkinous, thou hast indeed
 Promised thy dancers should be best of all,
 And it has proved so. Wonder fills my mind
 As I look on." So said he, and rejoiced
 Sacred Alkinous, and addressed forthwith
 His lords Phæakian, lovers of the oar.
 "Hear me, Phæakian counsellors and chiefs;
 The stranger seems to me to be a man
 Of prudent mind. Come, let us give to him
 Gifts that beseem a host: for in our land

Twelve famous chiefs bear rule, and I myself
Am thirteenth. Let then each of these bring out
A well-washed cloak and tunic, and of gold
Much prized, a talent. And we'll put them all
Together in a heap, that so our guest
Having them in his hands, may take his meal
With gladness in his heart. Euryalus
Must give him satisfaction with his words
And with a gift, since unbecomingly
He spoke to him." So said he, and they all
Approved, and each a herald sent to bring
The gifts. And then Euryalus replied
And said: "Alkinous, most illustrious,
I will give satisfaction to our guest
As thou desirest, I will give a sword
All brass, with silver hilt and sheath inlaid
With new-cut ivory, of no small worth."
So saying, in his hands he placed a sword
Studded with silver, and addressing him,
Spoke these winged words: "Most honoured stranger,
hail!

And if a word distasteful has been said
May the wild storms dispel it far away,
And may the gods enable thee to see
Thy wife, and gain thy fatherland, since long
Away from friends thou'st suffered heavy woe.
And sage Odysseus answering him replied:
"And thou, my friend, all hail, and may the gods

Grant thee prosperity, and may'st thou ne'er
Hereafter feel the want of this good sword
Which with appeasing words thou'st given me."
He said, and to his shoulder hung the sword
With silver-studded hilt. Then set the sun—
And the rich gifts which all around him lay
The heralds to Alkinous' mansion brought.
His sons receiving them, these presents fair
Lodged with their honoured mother. And the might
Of King Alkinous led them, and they came
And sat on lofty seats. Alkinous then
Addressed Arete: "Lady, go, bring out
A right good chest, the best thou hast in store;
And place in it the well-washed cloak and vest.
And put the caldron on the fire and heat
Water, that, having washed and seen the gifts
All safely lodged, by good Phæakians brought,
He may enjoy the feast and hear the strains
Of song. And I will give this golden cup
Of rare device, that, bearing me in mind
From day to day, he may libations pour
To Zeus and to the other gods, beneath
His own roof-tree." So said he, and her maids
Arete bade to place above the fire
In haste a tripod great. And o'er the blaze
They placed the tripod for Odysseus' bath,
And poured in water, and brought wood and fed
The fire, and round the caldron played the flame,

Heating the water. Meanwhile from her room
Arete for her guest brought out a chest
Most fair to see, and into it she put
The presents rich ; the raiment and the gold,
Gifts of Phæakian chieftains, and besides
She added to the gifts a goodly cloak
And tunic, and addressing him she used
These wingèd words : “ Now look thyself and see
The lid, and quickly fix it with a cord,
Lest any one should rob thee on the way,
When thou art sleeping a sweet sleep aboard
The dark-hulled ship. And when the godlike man,
Much tried Odysseus, heard, he forthwith closed
The lid, and fastened it with knotted cord,
As once dread Circe taught him. Thereupon
The house-dame bade him go and take a bath
And wash. And he with gladness in his heart
Saw the warm bath, for comfort such as this
He lacked since he had left the island home
Of fair Calypso, where he like a god
Was tended. When the maids had given the bath,
Anointed him with oil, and round him thrown
The beauteous cloak and tunic, from the bath
He went and joined the princes at their wine.
But stood Nausicaa, as goddess fair,
Beside a pillar of the well-framed roof,
And gazing at Odysseus wondered much,
And with these wingèd words accosted him :

“ Stranger, farewell, and in thy fatherland
Remember me to whom thou owest first
Thy rescue !” And Odysseus answering said :
“ Nausicaa, child of great Alkinous,
May Zeus so order it, the thundering spouse
Of Here ! may I reach my home again,
And see the happy day of my return !
There will I as a goddess worship thee
From day to day, for thou hast saved my life,
Fair maid.” He said, and took his seat beside
Alkinous, King. And now his share to each
They dealt, and mixed the wine. And soon drew near
The herald leading the blind minstrel sweet,
Demodocus, by all the people praised,
And in the middle of the banqueters
He seated him beside a pillar tall,
To lean against. And then Odysseus wise
Cutting out from the chine of white-tusked boar
A portion rich with fat and savoury juice,
Much leaving still, the herald thus addressed :
“ Now, herald, to Demodocus convey
This portion for his meal. I’ll welcome him,
Though very sad at heart ; for all mankind
Dwellers on earth, the minstrel reverence
And honour ; for the Muse their theme inspires,
And loves the songster race.” Odysseus said,
And in his hand the herald took the share
And gave it to Demodocus renowned,

Who pleased at heart the welcome gift received.
Then on the savoury feast before them spread
They laid their hands. And when desire for food
And drink was gone, Odysseus wise addressed
Demodocus: "Above all other men
I reverence thee, Demodocus; the Muse,
Daughter of Zeus has surely taught thee song,
Or Phœbus; for most touchingly thou sing'st
The hap of the Achaians, what they did
And suffered, and what labours they endured;
As if thou hadst been present, and not heard
The tale from others. But come, change thy theme
And sing the story of the wooden horse
Made by Epeius with Athene's aid,
Which fatal snare divine Odysseus brought
Crowded with warriors to the acropolis,
And made an end of Ilium. If all this
Thou can'st narrate in order, I will tell
To all men that to thee a kindly god
Hath given immortal song." Odysseus said,
And he, with inspiration from the god,
Began, and sang the story from the time
When in their well-benched ships embarked, the
Greeks
Set sail, their huts and shelter left ablaze.
But some already with Odysseus famed
Crouched secretly within the wooden horse
In the agora of the Trojans, who themselves

Drew it to the acropolis. There it stood,
And sitting round it they had much debate,
Being in doubt. Three thoughts divided them :
Should they with keen-edged axe the hollow horse
Cut through,—or should they draw it to the edge
And thrust it from the rock,—or should they there
Leave it, a grand peace-offering to the gods ?
This last way then their counsels settled it,
For 'twas their fate to perish when they took
The monster wooden horse within their walls,
Wherein were couched the bravest of the Greeks,
Bringing upon the Trojans death and doom.
He sang too how the Achaians from the horse
Outstreaming, sacked the city when they'd left
Their hollow ambush ; and what deeds were done
By this and that man for the city's fall ;
How to the dwelling of Deïphobus
Hurried Odysseus, furious as Ares,
With godlike Menelaus ; how he vowed
There to face direst war and overcome
By great Athene's aid. All these things sang
The minstrel famed. But sage Odysseus' heart
Was melted, and a tear bedewed his cheek
Beneath his brow ; and as a woman weeps
With fond embrace upon her husband loved,
Who in the face of fellow-citizens
Before the walls has fallen in the cause
Of friends and children, lest a bitter day

Be theirs ; and witnessing his dying throes,
Casts herself on him, and with piercing cries
Bewails him ; and the enemy behind
Smiting her back and shoulders with their shafts,
Drive her away to bondage, to endure
Labour and woe ; and from her cheeks the bloom
Wastes with her utter grief ; so did the tears
Stream from Odysseus' eyes. His weeping 'scaped
The notice of the rest ; Alkinous
Alone perceived and turned it in his mind,
For sitting near to him he chanced to hear
His deep-drawn groans ; and his Phæakian chiefs
Straightway addressed : " Phæakian counsellors
And chieftains, listen. Let Demodocus
Refrain now from the lyre, for not to all
Gives his song pleasure ; since the feast was done
And the sweet bard began, our stranger guest
Has ceased not his lament, for heavy grief
Methinks, weighs down his soul ; so come be hushed
His song, that all, the stranger and his friends,
May have a merry time ; 'tis better so.
Since for our honoured stranger are prepared
The swift ship and the gifts which lovingly
We've brought for him. For in a brother's place
The stranger and the suppliant is held
By all men, even those of little wit.
Wherefore evade not now with crafty thought
What I shall ask thee. It will serve thee best

To speak out openly. Thy name declare,
The name thy father and thy mother gave,
And what the people call thee who around
Thy city dwell. None goes without a name
When first he sees the light, or bad or good,
For parents give to all a name at birth.
Tell me thy land, thy people, and thy town,
That so the ship that bears thee may direct
Her course. For we Phæakians place no man
To steer, nor is there rudder, as the ships
Of other people have. But our ships know
The thoughts and mind of men, the cities know
Of all men, and their fertile lands, and hid
In mist and cloud, with bird-like speed they cross
The ocean's vast expanse. Nor dread they e'er
Wreck or mishap. But in time past I heard
My sire Nausithoüs relate the grudge
Borne towards us by Poseidon, all because
We help unscathed each wanderer on his way.
He vowed he'd one day wreck a well-wrought ship
Manned by Phæakians, on her homeward way
Across the murky deep from carrying
Some wanderer to his home, and circle round
Our city with a mound; so used to say
The aged man. But as the god may will
Shall these things be, to come to pass or not.
But come now, tell me this, and truly tell,
Where thou hast wandered, and what lands of men

Hast visited: themselves, what sort they are,
And what their well-filled cities, both the men
Who're fierce and cruel, and care not for right,
And those who love the stranger, and whose hearts
Reverence the gods. And tell me why thou weep'st
And sighest a deep sigh when hearing sung
The doom of Ilium and her Danaan foes.
The gods indeed have done it, and have spun
The thread of fate to men to make a song
For time to come. Hast thou at Ilium lost
Some kinsman of thy wife, a warrior brave,
Father or brother, for most loved are these
And honoured after those who're bound to us
By ties of blood? Or has some comrade good
Perished, thy heart's delight, for such a one
Endowed with wisdom, comes no whit behind
A kinsman in man's love."

